

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: May 12, 2016

Agenda Item: Nongame Check-Off Workplan

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Min

Background

Under the provisions of 87-5-122, MCA, “the FWP Commission shall review and annually approve the nongame wildlife program’s projects recommended by the Department for funding from the nongame wildlife account. The commission shall provide for public comment during the review and approval process.” While final 2015 tax year donations are unknown at this time, the average received by FWP from the 2004-2014 tax years was \$27,500/year. (As of March 31, 2016, \$20,800 had been donated for tax year 2015, which is average for this time of year.) FWP is proposing the following work in FY17 with this anticipated funding in addition to some balance in the fund from previous years:

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| \$ 5,000 | Inventory, monitoring and conservation work on Montana Species of Concern and species in need of inventory as determined through a formal ranking process. |
| \$ 5,000 | Prioritize habitat for conservation including: 1) identifying the most critical habitat needs for nongame, threatened or endangered species, 2) identifying and monitoring threats to these critical habitats. |
| \$ 5,000 | Competitive student stipend for nongame research. |
| \$35,000 | Wildlife viewing and outreach projects that encourage more Montanans to appreciate Montana wildlife. |

Public Involvement & Results

Public comment will be solicited upon tentative approval until Friday, June 17th, 2016.

Alternatives and Analysis

The recommended work addresses several components of FWP’s overall nongame management program (including threatened and endangered species management), as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. Tax check-off funding is used in conjunction with State Wildlife Grants to address high priority habitat, survey and inventory, and species conservation needs. Alternatives could include allocating more or less among these categories.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends the F&W Commission endorse the proposed work for funding with nongame tax check-off funds.

Proposed Motion

Move that the Fish and Wildlife Commission tentatively approve the proposed Nongame Tax Check-Off work for Fiscal Year 2017.